

applications; Revelation should be included for the broad outline of history it contains; and the first part of Genesis must be taught emphasizing its implications in biology and geology and history.

Teaching Bible in the Christian school then need not be considered extraneous or unimportant. Properly executed, Bible class will be the most valuable time spent during the school day.

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The Least of These

(Reprinted from *Hope's Highlights* — April, 1987)

Her name was Gladys.

The names and faces of my seventh grade classmates have long since faded from memory, except for one or, perhaps, two. But even though Gladys was a grade below me, I remember her name and face vividly.

She was a little shorter and thinner than the other girls. Not much, though; not really enough to set her apart. Her hair was often disheveled and a little bit stringy. Her dresses were often faded and sometimes showed obvious signs of repair. As I remember her, she always looked sad.

A group of us boys were standing around loitering one recess. One of the boys saw Gladys some distance away, standing alone, and with the casual cruelty of boys that age said, "I'll bet Gladys has cooties." That brought him the attention he was looking for, and immediately another boy repeated more loudly, "Gladys has cooties."

Then, of course, we all began to chant the awful words together and to move closer so that Gladys would be sure to hear.

Gladys turned away and made believe she didn't hear us, but we kept on and on. Gladys cried. She tried to get past us to go into school, but we blocked her way and called her a baby. Finally, shaking with sobs and with the speed of desperation, she dashed into school.

Now we began to worry: would she tattle on us? Suddenly it didn't seem quite so much fun. Fear (I wish I could say awakening conscience) made us begin making excuses to each other. She doesn't have to bawl over a little thing like that. We didn't hurt her any. We were only having a little fun. We wouldn't have done it if we had known she was going to bawl. Half-expecting her teacher to come out of the door in a rage and call us in, we began to move apart and each to think of his

FROM THE TEACHERS' LOUNGE

personal excuses. I didn't start it. I didn't say it very loudly. She didn't even hear me.

Through all the years since that day, I have seen again and again that small face twisted in despair, the tear-stained face, the reddened eyes. I began to realize that there are no excuses that can cover the wrong that I had done to another person that day.

Why did we do that cruel thing? We are so concerned about ourselves then, so self-centered. We tell ourselves that we will seem more important to ourselves and to our friends if we demonstrate how low someone else can be. We are afraid something like this may happen to us, and we think we are protecting ourselves by hurting someone else.

Why did we pick on Gladys? I think there were two reasons. One is the simple fact that she was different, and different to a youngster (and to oldsters, too) is bad. She wasn't like us. The other reason is equally simple: she was vulnerable. Because we knew that we could hurt her,

and she could not defend herself, we felt we had to attack her.

Why wasn't there anyone to defend Gladys? Any person who would defend Gladys would risk his own status before his friends. No one had the moral courage — yes, the Christian character — to come to her defense. It's one of the hardest things in the world to do — to risk one's social position — but one of the most essential things for a Christian to learn.

I think of Gladys going into school alone with the taunting pack at her heels, and I'm terribly ashamed. I'm reminded of what Jesus once said, "If ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Now you understand why I react strongly when I find children being cruel to one another. I don't want anyone to carry such a burden on his conscience.

Fred Hanko, Sr.

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*"Let's hear it for trying something new!" writes Karen Buiter in an article which we've borrowed from a **Heritage Herald** of last year. Though one wouldn't guess it from the article, Miss Buiter is hardly yet a veteran teacher. She was at the time, in fact, in her second year of teaching — at Heritage Christian School in Hudsonville. And she was already enjoying the thrill and satisfaction of seeing students respond enthusiastically to a teacher's doing more than just "teaching the book." Sometimes it may take a little longer to complete a unit, when one "tries*